

THE BATAD KADANGYAN ETHNIC LODGES PROJECT: COMMUNITY-BASED INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN A UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE RICE TERRACE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

*Proyecto Hospedaje Étnico De Batad Kadangyan:
Turismo Basado en Las Comunidades Indígenas En El Paisaje Cultural
Patrimonio Mundial De Las Terrazas De Arroz*

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ABSTRACT

The UNESCO World Heritage Batad Rice Terrace Cluster Cultural Landscape is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Philippines. Yet, indigenous Ifugaos who tend these paddies complain that they have not been able to share in the economic benefits that tourism brings. The Batad Kadangyan Ethnic Lodges Project aims to address this issue by enabling these farmers and their families to engage tourists through capitalizing on the tangible and intangible heritage that they possess.

The indigenous Ifugao house (*baluy*) is an integral part of the endangered UNESCO World Heritage Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras cultural landscape, and an outstanding jewel of Filipino architectural patrimony. However, conservation programs have mostly neglected these grass-roofed dwellings, and have focused more on the rice terraces only or on other aspects of the rice culture. As a result, many *baluys* have fallen into disrepair because the subsistence farmers who own them lack the resources to maintain these huts.

This paper relates the story of an ongoing community-based project in the small village of Batad, in the municipality of Banaue, province of Ifugao. Using traditional carpentry techniques and following local house building customs, three dilapidated *baluys* were initially restored with the cooperation of the family-owners. The renovated houses were then utilized as lodging and managed by the same families as part of an eco-cultural tour of the village. With additional funding from the Philippine National Commission for Culture and the Arts given in 2010, more houses were repaired. Some beneficiary families were subsequently able to recoup the project's restoration expenditures in less than a year. Seeing the value and feasibility of this project, the Philippine government promulgated another major house restoration initiative in 2014.

Difficulties facing the project include the unavailability of building materials, monitoring issues, and lack of marketing / promotion. Amidst these challenges, The Batad Kadangyan Ethnic Lodges Project tries to seek the right balance of tourism, cultural enrichment and community empowerment in the adaptive reuse of these traditional houses.

Key words: Philippines, community-based tourism, indigenous people, adaptive reuse, Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, Batad, Banaue, Ifugao

RESUMEN

El conjunto de Terrazas de Arroz de Batad, Paisaje Cultural de la UNESCO, es uno de los destinos turísticos más populares de las Islas Filipinas. Sin embargo, los indígenas Ifugaos quienes se ocupan de estos arrozales se quejan de que no han sido capaces de participar de los beneficios económicos que trae el turismo. El Proyecto Batad Kadangyan Ethnic Lodges trata de abordar este tema mediante el permiso a estos agricultores y sus familias a involucrar a los turistas a través de capitalizar el patrimonio material e inmaterial que poseen.

La casa indígena Ifugao (baluy) es una parte integral de las amenazadas Terrazas de Arroz Patrimonio Mundial de la UNESCO, en el paisaje cultural de las cordilleras filipinas, y una joya sobresaliente del patrimonio arquitectónico filipino. No obstante, los programas de conservación fundamentalmente han desatendido estas viviendas techadas con hierba, y se han centrado más en las terrazas de arroz solo o en otros aspectos de la cultura arrocería. Como resultado, muchos baluys han comenzado a deteriorarse ya que los agricultores de subsistencia propietarios de las mismas carecen de los recursos para mantenerlas.

Este trabajo se relaciona con la historia de un proyecto basado en la comunidad que todavía continúa en el pequeño pueblo de Batad, en el municipio de Banaue, provincia de Ifugao. Utilizando las técnicas de carpintería tradicional y siguiendo las costumbres de construcción de las casas locales, se han restaurado inicialmente tres baluys en malas condiciones con la cooperación de los propietarios- la familia. Las casas renovadas fueron entonces utilizadas como albergues y gestionadas por las mismas familias como parte de un tour eco-cultural del pueblo. Junto con financiación suplementaria de la Comisión Nacional Filipina para la Cultura y las Artes otorgada en 2010, se repararon más casas. Algunas familias beneficiarias fueron a continuación capaces de recobrar los gastos del proyecto de restauración en menos de un año. Viendo el valor y la viabilidad de este proyecto, el gobierno filipino promovió otra iniciativa de restauración de una casa principal en 2014.

Las dificultades del proyecto incluyen la inviabilidad de los materiales de construcción, aspectos de supervisión y falta de publicidad/marketing. En medio de estos desafíos, el Proyecto Batad Kadangyan Ethnic Lodges trata de buscar el correcto equilibrio entre turismo, enriquecimiento cultural y fortalecimiento en la reutilización adaptativa de estas casas tradicionales.

Palabras clave: *Islas Filipinas, turismo basado en la comunidad, población indígena, reutilización adaptativa, Terrazas de Arroz de las Cordilleras Filipinas, Batad, Banaue, Ifugao.*



1 INTRODUCTION

The Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras is a living cultural landscape of flooded paddies manually built over centuries by the various indigenous groups which populate the steep mountains of the landlocked Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). The National Historical Institute of the Philippines asserts that these are 2000 years old, but archaeologists have found them to be more recent (about 600 to 400 years old). Although rice terraces can be found throughout this region, the five representative sites inscribed on the UNESCO list (Nagacadan, Hungduan, Mayoyao, Bangaan and Batad) are all found in the province of Ifugao. The difficult terrain of this region, coupled with the fierceness of the natives (many of whom practiced headhunting), prevented the Spanish from effectively penetrating this area during their 333-year domination of the Philippines. It was only during the American colonization that the tribes were effectively “pacified” (Florendo 2000). As such, the peoples of the Cordilleras have been able to preserve a significant part of their ancient culture as compared to lowland Filipinos.

The rich culture of the Ifugao people has attracted many anthropologists like H. Otley Beyer, whose extensive studies (e.g. Beyer 1918) earn him the title of “Father of Philippine Anthropology”. His contemporary, Roy F. Barton, also published the first studies on Ifugao law (1919), economics (1922) and religion (1946). Christian missionaries were also keen on reporting on the customs of the Ifugao, with Belgian CICM priest Frans Lambrecht first documenting rituals like the *Hudhud* (1957). As such, the Ifugaos are purportedly the most studied indigenous group in the Philippines (Dulnuan-Bimohya 2001). They are also the most celebrated because the rice terraces (a source of Filipino identity and pride) are associated with them.

Despite this richness in culture, this region is one of the poorest in the Philippines, with (seemingly underestimated) poverty rates reaching 59% in one province (Apayao). The province of Ifugao is the seventh poorest province in the Philippines, with an estimated poverty incidence of 47.5% (Philippine National Census and Statistics Board 2013). This is mainly due to the fact that the majority of its inhabitants are involved in a shrinking agricultural industry, which does not yield much, considering that about 80% of the land area of this province has a slope of over 18 degrees. There is also a well-established craft industry focused mainly on weaving and hand-carved wooden items, since the native Ifugaos are renowned craftspeople. Tourism is also a main economic driver, with the municipality of Banaue (where the Batad and Bangaan rice terrace clusters are located) taking the lion’s share (80%) of the 100,000 tourists coming to the province every year. However, the tourism in Ifugao is considered a sunset industry, apparently because the unbridled overdevelopment of the area in the 1980s and 1990s destroyed much of the landscape and cultural fabric (Save the Ifugao Terraces Movement 2008).

The province of Ifugao is named after the ethnolinguistic group that has lived in this area since time immemorial. They are also the ones who carved the rice terraces out of these marginal slopes. “Ifugao” means “people of the hill”, and also refers to the language being spoken by most of the 180,000 people living here. The language has four distinct dialects: Amganad, Tuwali, Batad and Mayoyao (Newell 1993). Settlers from other provinces (especially from the Ilocos area) also live here, thereby making Ilocano the *lingua franca* in this area. Of the 11 municipalities comprising the province of Ifugao, Banaue is the most prosperous, being the center of tourism and handicraft production in the province. This fourth class municipality is comprised of 18 *barangays* (villages), each with its own democratically-elected council.

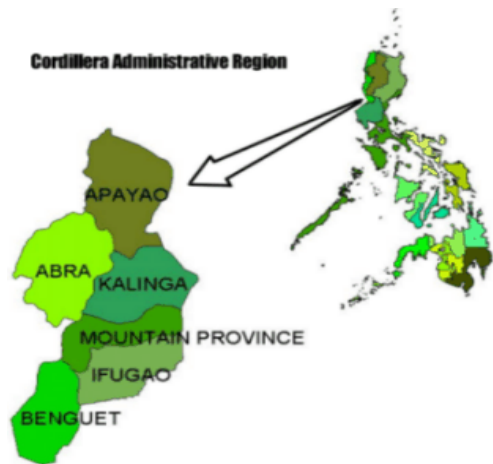


Figure 1. Map of the Philippines, with detail of the Cordillera Administrative Region and its six provinces (nscb.gov.ph)

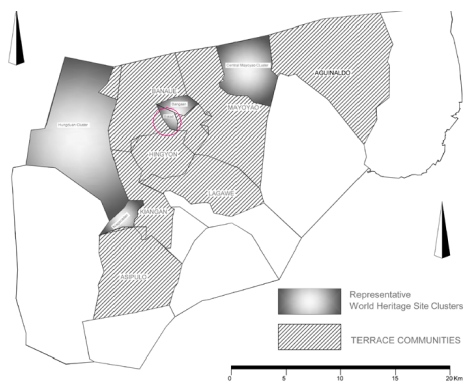


Figure 2. Map of the Province of Ifugao, showing terraced communities and representative World Heritage Site clusters (Batad is encircled; Save the Ifugao Terraces Movement 2008)



Photo 1. Google map of central rice terrace cluster of Batad

Batad, the project site, is a *barangay* with about 1200 inhabitants. From Banaue town center (which is a eight-hour bus ride from the capital Manila), one has to travel for over an hour by all-terrain vehicle to the Batad Saddle ridge, and then hike for another hour down into the village. Its center is nestled in a valley about 1000 meters above sea level, and its east-facing terraces are considered by many to be the most spectacular of the five rice terrace cluster on the UNESCO inscription. Its touristic allure is also enhanced by the Tappiyah Falls, a 70-meter cascade about an hour's hike from the village center. Most of the inhabitants are subsistence farmers who plant rice (on the terraces), legumes (on the terrace walls), and sweet potato (in swidden plots). They also raise fish (tilapia or mudfish) in the terraces for their own consumption during the fallow months. As such, they do not produce any surplus for trading, and usually depend on imports from central Banaue or other areas. Being a popular tourist destination, some residents also eke out a living from offering tourist accommodations, guiding, reflexology and selling food & souvenirs. However, most working-age inhabitants leave to find work in the cities or in gold mines. Since Batad only has an elementary school, children of high school age have to reside outside the village in order to attend high school. Thus, most of the people one will see in Batad are either really old or really young.



Photo 2. The Tappiya Falls

The remoteness of this mountain village has kept its cultural and natural milieu well-protected. Recent ecological assessments have found high levels of biodiversity in the area (Martin Wiemers, personal communication, March 2012). However, it has not been immune to climate change effects. In 2010, the area suffered from a prolonged drought, which significantly reduced rice harvests. The following year, two days of incessant typhoon-induced rain caused a major landslide which damaged 32 terraces, leaving an unsightly scar down the middle of the picturesque terrace cluster. There is also a long-standing infestation of destructive earthworms in the area, whose burrowing activities have contributed to the weakness and erosion of many terraces (Marquez 2005).

It is also this remoteness and geographical isolation that has kept Batad villagers poor despite the richness of their milieu. Unless one drives his or her own all-terrain vehicle up to the Batad Saddle ridge, a tourist commuting by bus will have to go down at the Banaue town center in order to board another jeep or tricycle headed for Batad. Upon alighting from the bus, the hapless tourist will endlessly be harassed by touts and tour guides offering their services. It is not uncommon for fights to ensue among the touts, especially during lean months. Most, if not all, of these tourism service providers are not from Batad. The guides in Batad mostly wait for clients at the Batad Saddle since they do not want to fight with the central town guides for tourists. As such, the people in the Banaue town center get a near monopoly of the incoming tourists. Of course, some allied tour guides promote central Banaue inns to the tourists, and just recommend doing a half-day trip to Batad without sleeping at the village inns. Thus, much of the tourist money gets concentrated at the center, with very little trickling down to the periphery.

Summary of qualities characterizing the site

The Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras were inscribed on the UNESCO WHL in 1995 (World Heritage Committee 1996), because of the following reasons:

- “Criterion (iii) The rice terraces are a dramatic testimony to a community’s sustainable and primarily communal system of rice production, based on harvesting water from the forest clad mountain tops and creating stone terraces and ponds, a system that has survived for two millennia.
- Criterion (iv) – The rice terraces are a memorial to the history and labour of more than a thousand generations of small-scale farmers who, working together as a community, have created a landscape based on a delicate and sustainable use of water resources.
- Criterion (v) – The rice terraces are an outstanding example of land-use resulting from a harmonious interaction between people and their environment which has produced a steep terraced landscape of great aesthetic beauty, now vulnerable to social and economic changes.”

The rice terraces are one of the first UNESCO-inscribed cultural landscapes, since the operational guidelines were promulgated in 1993 (Villalon 2012). Being so, the UNESCO values how the landscape was shaped by the “combined work of nature and of humans”. Thus, aside from the marvellous rice terraces, other tangible and intangible cultural elements of this area are considered.

Baluy: Montane Vernacular Architecture. The vernacular architecture of raised granary houses (*baluy*) are considered important for the visual integrity of the landscape. So much so that the 1995 decision to include the terraces in the World Heritage List recommended the continued use of the traditional thatch roofing (which was slowly being replaced by unsightly corrugated iron sheets). Whereas there exist several types of native house designs in various parts of the Cordillera region (Scott 1962), the Ifugao *baluy* is arguably the most famous and iconic. An original *baluy* from the province can be found in the courtyard of the National Museum of the Filipino people in Manila. It is also the source of inspiration for modern Philippine buildings like the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Folks Arts Theater, and the Philippine High School for the Arts. Aside from the tangible heritage (i.e. the house itself), numerous efforts have been done to pass on the intangible house-building skills to the younger generations. The Nurturing Indigenous Knowledge Experts (NIKE) Program, for example, has conducted community training workshops in *baluy* construction (NIKE Program 2010).

Muyong: Community-managed forests. Another important aspect of the landscape are the *muyong*, forests surrounding the terraces which act as watersheds. These *muyong* are one of the five key agro-ecological zones of this cultural landscape. These woodlots, which are managed by the community, are the primary sources of water, which is also equitably distributed according to tribal practices. Aside from water, firewood, lumber, food and medicines can be found in these biological storehouses. This traditional Ifugao silviculture system has been identified by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as prime examples of assisted natural regeneration of denuded forests, especially in mountainous areas (Butic & Ngidlo 2003).

An intricate system of dams, sluices, canals and bamboo tubes also shows the high level of hydrological knowledge developed by the Ifugao over many centuries. Drawing water from the *muyong* watersheds and other springs, the Ifugao have been able to keep the paddies flooded with water for most of the year (this despite mountain slopes of up to 70 degrees). This intricate irrigation system is one of reasons why the FAO has included the rice terraces in its list of Globally-important Agricultural Heritage Sites (GIAHS; Department of Environment and Natural Resources 2008).

The native religion and its various rituals (mostly associated with the agricultural cycle of rice) presided over by the *mumbaki* (shaman) and the *bulol* (rice deity) is also deemed an important element of this landscape. The Christianization of this area in the 1950s has led to the denigration of these rituals. However, as a marker of indigenous identity, many Christianized Cordillerans still perform some of these rituals. One of the foremost examples is the *begnas* of Sagada, a town in the neighboring Mountain Province (Voss, Jefremovas & Alcantara 2005). The *begnas* are a series of five rituals done throughout the agricultural cycle and involve the whole town, with certain family groups “sponsoring” each gathering. More recently though, only three of the five *begnas* rituals are conducted in Sagada (Allad-iw 2013).

The inclusion of the *Hudhud* Epic Chants to the representative list of UNESCO Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage managed to renew interest in these traditional practices (UNESCO 2001). These leader-chorus type chants are mainly sung during harvest time, while the women are harvesting the rice in the paddies. However, there are other chants that are sung at various important social events, like deaths and coming-of-age haircuts for males (Stanyukovich 2013).

Moreover, the rice itself is central to this cultural landscape. The tangible rice is *Oryza sativa javanica*, a short-grained rice subspecies that only grows in high altitude areas of the tropics (Londo, et al. 2006). The topography of the Cordillera mountain range with its many isolated villages has given rise to hundreds of heirloom rice varieties, many of which disappeared with the government’s promotion of high-yielding rice varieties from the lowlands. The recovery of heirloom rice varieties, has fortunately been initiated. The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity Ark of Taste has included three varieties (Ominio, Chong-ak and Imbuucan) in its list of high-quality endangered food products (Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity, undated). Increased planting of these varieties is also being done to supply an export market of high-quality organic rice to the United States (Eighth Wonder, Incorporated 2008). The intangible rice planting culture, from the yearly agricultural cycles (Barton 1922) down to the talents of the women seed-keepers (Santiaguel 2010), is most crucial to the survival of the rice terraces.

Other aspects not mentioned in the UNESCO inscription document are the native crafts of this area. The Ifugao are known as the best woodcarvers in the country, and as such, a thriving low-quality souvenir crafts industry can be found here. There is also a distinct weaving tradition here, although it is eclipsed by more vigorous traditional textile industries elsewhere in the Philippines. These and other elements of Ifugao indigenous culture are seen as drivers of economic growth for this poor province, albeit with a decidedly touristic orientation (Mananghaya 2011).



Photo 3. *Baluys* (granary-houses) situated in Balihong, Batad, Banaue, circa 2008



Photo 4. Interior of a *baluy*, showing carved beams and rice bundles hung to dry

The World Heritage Committee in 1995 did not come up with a Statement of Universal Value for the Rice Terrace of the Philippine Cordilleras. The declaration does not even make too much issue with the conservation and authenticity of the rice terraces, save for the corrugated iron sheet roofs which threaten the visual integrity of the place. Although the ICOMOS and IUCN noted that rice terraces are not uncommon in Asia, they found the Cordilleran rice terraces to be remarkable because of their steepness (70 degrees maximum versus 40 degrees maximum in Bali, for example). The two advisory bodies even made the decision to forego a comparative analysis of similar rice cultivation landscapes due to the aforementioned “special qualities of the terraces”.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

General Objective

The general objective is to contribute to the preservation of the UNESCO Ifugao Rice Terrace Cultural Landscape through empowering indigenous peoples.

Target Group

This project’s main beneficiaries are the Batad rice terrace farmers and their families. However, it is unavoidable that the project will also assist other locals of Batad who are not really farmers. They may want to participate in the project, and it would be socially unacceptable to exclude them.

Strategies and Priorities

Holistic view of the cultural landscape

Most government efforts at protecting the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras fail to treat the area as a complex cultural landscape by usually focusing only on the terraces. This project aims to tap into other crucial elements of the landscape (vernacular architecture, gastronomy, rituals, etc.) in order that more value will be added to the touristic experience. This will also give incentive for the people to preserve their cultural heritage.

Harnessing cultural assets of rice terrace farmer families

The families of rice terrace farmers have the strongest links to the ancient Ifugao culture. Most of them are traditionally high-status families who have managed to hold on to their material (e.g. heirloom wine jars, native houses, basketry) as well as immaterial (rituals, genealogy, oral history) culture. One only has to make them more aware of these things and show them that tourists are interested in these things that seem ordinary to them.

Restoration and adaptive reuse

The restoration and adaptive reuse of historical buildings has been a crucial strategy in the preservation of the visual integrity of many areas. This community-based tourism plan is anchored on this concept. By restoring and reusing

dilapidated native houses (*baluys*) for use as tourist lodging, the visual integrity of this cultural landscape is maintained. Furthermore, these restored houses will then be able to regain one of their original purposes (i.e. as rice granaries).

Eliminating/By-passing middlemen from the touristic supply chain

As mentioned previously, the locals of Batad have mostly remained poor because touristic middlemen have extracted most of the value from this cultural supply chain. By making efforts to directly connect locals and/or rice terrace farmer families to tourists, we may be able to funnel more of the economic value to their rightful beneficiaries.

Environmental sustainability

Since indigenous ways of life have been seen as the most environmentally sustainable, this project can be considered as environmentally sustainable since it works for the continuation of traditional Ifugao practices. The ecologically-responsive architectural characteristics of the *baluy* will stand as a great counterpoint to the un-ergonomic modern structures mushrooming around the terraces. Its focus on low impact, low numbers, high value cultural tourism further reinforces the environmental sustainability of this project.

Economic sustainability

In order to facilitate the duplicability of this project in other rice terrace areas, extra focus was made to minimize monetary inputs. House building materials are being sourced from the community-managed forests, and therefore cost much less. It is hoped that much of the value that the tourist will be paying for will come from the culture bearers of Batad (especially the rice terrace farming families). Previous house restorations have cost around 50,000 pesos (around 1041 euros). Thus, if the house owner has at least 50 guests paying 1000 pesos in a year, then the investment can be easily recouped. Further financial input will also come from student field trips that will be conducted by the University of the Philippines Center for International Studies and other educational institutions.

Tourist education and fair tourism appeals

When tourists are more informed about ethical travel behaviors, they will be able to make better choices, and thus bring more of their money to the locality of Batad. Making this ethical appeal to tourists (especially foreigners) may enhance or increase their willingness to pay for services rendered by the rice terrace farmer families.

Connections with Institutions

As a local endeavor, the project has to primarily engage the Barangay (village) council. The proponents are confident of this, since the members of the council hold the proponents in high regard due to the proponent's several years of friendship, and development work done in the village. The Philippine National Commission for Culture and the Arts is also involved in the project, as it has previously funded the restoration of a native house, and is currently funding repairs of rice terraces

and other houses. The Save the Ifugao Terraces Movement (SITMo), the foremost NGO in the area, is also a continuing consultant to this project. Academic ties with the University of the Philippines are also well-established, primarily the Center for International Studies (where the proponent is an Assistant Professor), and the College of Architecture (where one of the professors aids in the documentation of restoration processes). The project also has a consultant architect from the Philippine Rice Research Institute.

Outputs in detail

Native house restoration

Since *baluys* are important elements of the cultural landscape, and that many rice terrace farmer families have unused and/or dilapidated native houses, this project revolves around these. The vernacular architecture of this area is quite unique and important in the Philippines due to its hole-and-peg construction and pyramidal shape. Using traditional techniques, five houses are being restored and modified for use as tourist lodging. This process is being implemented mainly through the families, who will be providing manual labor and most of the materials. The project will only provide a little cash in order to pay for certain things that have to be bought from outside Batad (e.g. rattan strips for tying, pine wood for posts). Furthermore, this project employs a master-apprentice approach, wherein a master house-builder is assisted by younger assistants. Thus, the tradition of Ifugao house building may be passed on from one generation to the next.

Experience and Itinerary Development

The project is also working with the rice terrace farmer families and other Batad locals in order to design possible touristic experiences and itineraries. This involves looking at their everyday life and then designing a tourist experience which will enable the tourists to participate in daily chores (e.g. pounding rice, preparing food, etc.). Other possible hiking destinations aside from the usual Tappiyah Falls were also explored. Inquiries are also being made as to potential experiences for specialized groups (e.g. birdwatchers, lepidopterists, etc.).

Training

Once the abovementioned experiences / itineraries are finalized, the project will select and recruit at least one member of each rice terrace farmer family with a renovated native house. They will be taught the itinerary, and then they will pilot-test these with some volunteer tourists. Feedback will be taken from the tourists and used to further refine the itineraries.

Marketing

As one of the strategies of this project is to directly connect tourists with the rice terrace farmers, one of the ways to do this is to establish an internet presence with the possibility of booking. As such, it is crucial to develop a website or open a Facebook account.

3 INITIAL RESULTS

Encouraging signs

Much of the project's resources are currently being focused on the restoration of the houses. To date, we have already fully restored six houses, and the potential for these houses to bring in more income to their owner-families seems promising.

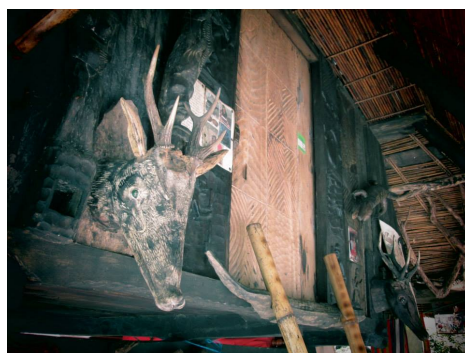


Photos 5 & 6: Roof installations of a lodge at Sitio Gabgab

One positive case is that of the Ugay Lodge in Sitio Gabgab, along the hillside facing the main rice terraces of Batad. This *baluy* is owned by Mr. Donato Ugay, a carpenter who moved to Manila as a newly-wed man, and has gone back to Batad for retirement after raising his family in a city slum. This traditional house was previously dismantled and stored due to roof damage. Roof damage to these houses is a major concern since this will cause the seeping in of rainwater into the structure, thereby causing rotting of the wooden parts and the growing of molds which spoil the rice stored therein. In the summer of 2010, a verbal agreement with Mr. Ugay was made, and he personally set about restoring his own house. He also got help from his brother, other relatives, and neighbors through a community labor system called “*changah*”. Since Mr. Ugay, like many Ifugaos, was also a woodcarver, he was able to make many decorative additions to his hut. He also did much of the work for the restoration of his hut, thereby saving quite a lot on labor costs. The project gave him 30,000 pesos (~625 euros) in cash, and he used his own savings to pay for the other costs involved. He also built a simple toilet and bathing cubicle a few steps away from the lodge.

After some basic training in hosting and preparation of accommodations, the Ugay Lodge was ready to take in its first guest. The project printed a tarpaulin poster for him, and he started renting out this *baluy* for 250-350 pesos (~5.20 to 7.30 euros) per person per night. Because this hut was located along the usual tourist path, it was very visible and had many walk-in guests. The project also promoted the hut through its networks, and some group bookings were made.

Mr. Ugay reported that the 30,000-peso contribution of the project was recouped in around six months, mainly due to group bookings. As he became busy with crafting souvenirs which he sells to tourists, he lets the tour guiding and trekking be done by the younger members of the local community. The success of this particular restoration has made Mr. Ugay very optimistic about living out his retirement years with his wife in Batad. Mr. Ugay is currently in the process of restoring another hut for the project.



Photos 7 & 8: The Ugay Lodge



Photo 9: Mr. Donato Ugay (right) with another project beneficiary, Mr. Ramon Binalit (left)

Challenges

This project, despite the seeming simplicity and ease of implementation, has encountered some major problems from which the proponents have been quick to learn from. Prior to the Ugay Lodge endeavor, the proponents gave money for the restoration of a hut in another part of the village. However, the hut was never

restored because some members of the family reportedly used the project funds for other purposes. This was somehow resolved by employing a build-first, pay-later scheme for the following restoration projects.

Because there were some structural problems with one of the houses restored, the proponents of the project also realized that, for a restoration to be properly implemented, at least one member of the beneficiary family should be knowledgeable in the basics of native house building. Because only a few members of the community are skilled in native house building, this has necessitated plans for training and mentoring among the beneficiaries of the project.



Photo 10: Tourists preparing rice for a meal (photo courtesy of Mariette Thomas)

4 CONCLUSION

The Batad Kadangyan Ethnic Lodges Project is a demonstration of how typically marginalized indigenous communities can be assisted and encouraged to engage tourism for their economic empowerment. The proponents of this project have seen the eagerness of the local people to benefit from tourism, especially when it has to do with the presentation of traditional culture. They simply need a bit of guidance and backing from certain supportive organizations. There are also tourists and friends who, after hearing about the project, have volunteered to fund the restoration of some native houses. While initial evidence of an endeavor such as this for the increase of wealth in small communities can be seen, further analyses and monitoring must be done in order to ascertain the overall sustainability of projects like this. Above all, an economic development project anchored on cultural resources such as the Ifugao *baluy* and the cultural landscape of the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras has been shown to enrich not just the local people. Their guests also have come away from this remote mountain village with a wealth of wonderful experiences.

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